

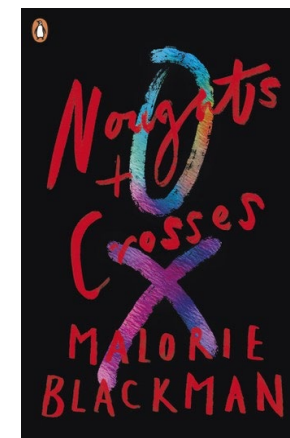


Your teacher will tell you which topic you should revise. Read and learn all the information in the topic, ready for a Quiz in lesson.

Topic 1: Context

Malorie Blackman was born in 1962.

- She was born in Barbados and moved to England at a young age.
- She experienced **racism** throughout her life.
- Blackman's **autobiography** has been published by 'Murky Books', which is Stormzy's publishing company.
- Her first published book was *Not So Stupid!* (1990), a book of short stories. Since then she has written many scripts, and her popularity has steadily grown.
- Her scripts for television include several episodes of *Byker Grove*, *Whizzwig* and *Pig-Heart Boy*, and she has original dramas for CITV and BBC Education.
- She **writes** for all ages of children.
- She has been **awarded** numerous prizes for her work, including the Red House Children's Book Award and Fiction Award. She has been described by The Times as 'a national treasure'.
- She believes that the subject of slavery is still important and **relevant** in modern **society**.
- Blackman understood that racism is an **emotive** issue but believed that they should be discussed in a
- She was influenced by myths and legends to create the names of Spey's family in the novel.
- The McGregor family names were based on Celtic tradition – Callum means 'dove', which is symbolic of peace.
- Blackman wanted to present mental illness in society, through the character of Lynette.
- It was important for Blackman to include real life events in the novel to make it more believable and relatable.
- She also wanted to show how lack of **education** can lead to **violence** – in the same way it does for Jude in the novel.
- By writing the novel, Blackman wanted to emphasise the issues that ethnic minorities could deal with on a regular basis, in real life: **inequalities** in education, health, the justice system and employment
- The Liberation Militia in the novel is based on the real life events of the IRA.



books and
also written
the Fantastic
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English
Noughts and Crosses

Year 8
Term 1

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Topic 2: Themes

Racism

Discrimination against one race is the novel's most obvious theme; it affects everything else that happens. Many of the hardships that Callum faces are based on real events in our own society. For example, he is abused when he becomes one of the first white students allowed into an all-black school; he only learns about black historical figures in class; and he is constantly put down by Crosses. Noughts also do poorly paid jobs, if they can get a job at all, and have fewer life chances and **opportunities**.

Terrorism

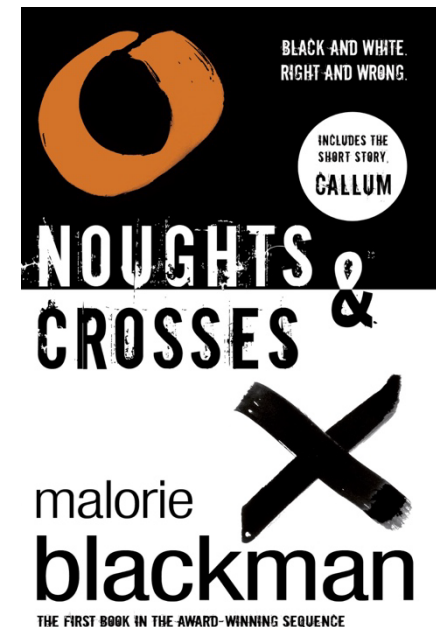
The "Liberation Militia" is a secretive group of Noughts who fight for equality by planting bombs and murdering Crosses. Their **terror** tactics are reminiscent of the IRA in the latter half of the 20th century. As Callum becomes more disillusioned by the way he and his family are treated, he begins to sympathise with them. The novel highlights how ordinary people can become **radicalised**.

Justice

Callum and Sephy both want **justice** for Noughts; they want a world where everyone is **equal**, and they can be together. But when members of Callum's own family get caught up in the process of the law, it is clear that the legal system is biased against them. The Death Penalty still exists in the world of characters, therefore the consequences of Callum and Sephy's **relationship** could be fatal.

Friendship

At the heart of Noughts and Crosses is the **friendship** between Callum and Sephy who remain friends despite the rules of society disobeying their close bond. They are very careful with their friendship and regularly meet in private to protect their friendship. Ultimately, their friendship blossoms into a **forbidden** love, reminiscent of Romeo and Juliet due to the **tragedy** involved. Like Shakespeare's lovers, Callum and Sephy are torn apart by the warring sides to which each other belongs.





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Topic 3: Genre and Plot Summary

Dystopia:

A **Dystopian** text is about an imagined society where there is great **suffering** and **injustice** for a group of people. 'Noughts and Crosses' describes an alternative history where African people gained in technological and organisation advancements over European people, with Africans keeping Europeans as slaves. In the novel, slavery is abolished, however, **segregation** is still apparent in society.


Plot – the beginning of the novel:

The novel *Noughts and Crosses* is based in a 21st-century parallel universe. Their world, technologically at least, is similar to the one we live in today: the same jobs, same type of government etc. But there is one key difference: equality between races is lacking and there aren't many laws or constitutions to protect from **discrimination**. There are two races in the book: Crosses (darker-skinned people) the **superior** race with the individuals owning lots of money, have good jobs and better schools etc. The second race, the Noughts (lighter-skinned people) are at the poorer end of society, usually doing manual labour or being servants to Crosses, with poor schools – if any at all.

Sephy (full name Persephone) Hadley is a Cross and one of the key **protagonists** in the novel. She is the daughter of a wealthy senior politician, Kamal Hadley, who later takes office as President. Callum McGregor is a Nought. They used to play together when Jasmine, Sephy's mother, employed Meggie McGregor, Callum's mother, as a Nanny. However, Jasmine fired Meggie for being unable to provide an **alibi** for her when Kamal confronts Jasmine about his suspicions of her infidelity: that is only strongly suggested at the beginning but is made explicit later. Since then, Sephy and Callum's friendship has been secret, as such interracial friendships are frowned upon by society.

Callum is one of the first few noughts to start at Heathcroft, a high school for Crosses that now accepts the best-performing Noughts. Sephy is overjoyed to find that Callum is in her class after helping him pass the entrance examination. However, most of her classmates do not accept her association with a Nought. The two develop a more intimate connection, and Sephy does not care about the **opposition** and even sits on a table with Noughts.

Meanwhile, Callum's elder brother, Jude, and his father, Ryan, join the Liberation Militia (LM), a violent paramilitary **organisation** against Cross supremacy. Jasmine becomes an alcoholic

	English Support and application	Year 8 Term 1
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Volence 2. Discrimination 3. Friendship 4. Courage 	<p>Context of Noughts and Crosses: https://www.malorieblackman.co.uk/noughts-and-crosses-qa/</p> <p>Why Noughts and Crosses is so important to the world today:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research the Apartheid Law and explain its relevance to the novel 'Noughts and Crosses'.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Betrayal 6. Loyalty 7. Tragedy 8. Forbidden 9. Noughts 10. Crosses 11. Slavery 12. Segregation 13. Separation 14. Racism 15. Family 16. Society 17. Modern 18. Blackman 19. Liberation 20. Militia 21. Dystopia 22. Fiction 23. Alternative 24. Perspectives 25. Interracial 26. Politician 27. Wealthy 28. Poverty 29. Dangerous 30. Underclass 	<p>https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/in-praise-of-malorie-blackman-why-noughts-crosses-is-so-important-gpngrf7ll</p> <p>Trailer for the BBC adaptation of Noughts and Crosses: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xTEJ4KJh4Ug</p> <p>Interview with Malorie Blackman: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A_8iSdsDXLI</p> <p>Quizlet: https://quizlet.com/subject/noughts-and-crosses/</p> <p>Further books by Malorie Blackman:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knife Edge • Checkmate • Double Cross • Boys Don't Cry • Chasing the Stars • Pig-Heart Boy • Thief 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Create a mind-map of words and phrases to describe Sephy and Callum. Use a thesaurus to help you. 3. Create a series of flash-cards that summarise the plot of 'Noughts and Crosses'. 4. Watch the BBC TV series 'Noughts and Crosses' and compare the events to the novel. 5. Create a storyboard of the novel, plotting the key events. 6. Write a diary entry from the point of view of Jude. What would you be thinking at different points of the novel? 7. Write a letter to Malorie Blackman explaining how you felt about the novel.
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